

Senate Fish, Wildlife and Parks Committee - Jan. 9, 2007

SB 34 [Senator S. Kitzenberg]

Testimony provided by the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association

SB 34 gives the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission the authority [p. 1, line 21] to limit the number of permits issued to nonresidents who apply in "unlimited permit" areas. SB 34 has the potential to effect nonresident hunting opportunities in 86 hunting districts.

Unlimited mule deer bucks, rifle or archery

HD 281
HD 292
HD 318
HD 319
HD 335
HD 339
HD 343
HD 380
HD 390
HD 391
HD 510

Unlimited antelope, statewide archery - 65 Hunting Districts

Unlimited elk, archery

HD 410
HD 417
HD 620
HD 621
HD 622

Unlimited big horn sheep, rifle or archery

HD 300
HD 303
HD 500
HD 501

Either sex elk archery/rifle limited entry (*mostly bulls)

HD 510
HD 511
HD 520
HD 530
HD 570

HD 575
HD 580*
HD 590
HD 701
HD 702
HD 704
HD 705

Points to consider:

- Guided nonresident hunters average 5 days in Montana and spend [on average] \$483 a day in direct expenditures, compared to non-hunting nonresidents who average 2.5 days in Montana and spend [on average] \$143/day in direct expenditures. (2006 Outfitter and Guide Economic Study. Norma Nickerson, Director of the Institute for Tourism and Recreational Research, Univ. of Montana, 2005 figures.)
- Rural economies depend upon nonresident sportsmen.
- SB 34 should include a fiscal note as it would have a fiscal impact, wherever implemented. Unfortunately, fiscal notes ignore the fiscal impact and hardship to rural economies
- Nonresident hunters fund around **67%** of the Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks' budget. If it were not for nonresident hunters and anglers, Montanans would have to pay a great deal more for their hunting and fishing privileges.
- By law and by tradition, nonresidents receive 10% of the limited entry permits. Restricting some nonresident hunters to **10% of UNLIMITED permits** smacks of greed and elitism.
- SB 34 - if passed - would set a dangerous precedent of moving towards more onerous treatment of nonresidents. Such discrimination puts Montana, which is **1/3 public land**, on thin ice.
- At a December 2005, FWP Commission meeting, similar proposed changes to the elk management plan met stiff resistance.
- It only takes 6% of the guided nonresidents to make up 38% of the recreation dollar.*
- **The Nickerson report/executive summary will be made available as soon as possible.**